

APPLICATION OF

VIRGINIA ELECTRIC AND POWER COMPANY

CASE NO. PUR-2025-00014

For approval and certification of electric transmission facilities: 230 kV Nebula-Raines Line #2399, 230 kV Nebula Switching Station, and 230 kV Cloud-Nebula Line #2402

FINAL ORDER

On January 24, 2025, Virginia Electric and Power Company (“Dominion” or the “Company”) filed with the State Corporation Commission (“Commission”) an application (“Application”) for approval and certification of electric transmission facilities in Mecklenburg County, Virginia.¹ Dominion filed its Application pursuant to § 56-46.1 of the Code of Virginia (“Code”), and the Utility Facilities Act, Code § 56-265.1 *et seq.*²

To provide service requested by Old Dominion Electric Cooperative on behalf of Mecklenburg Electric Cooperative (“MEC” or “Customer”) for MEC to provide service to its two new load additions in Mecklenburg County, the Company proposed to complete the following (collectively, the “Project”):³

- (1) Nebula-Raines Line: Construct a new overhead single circuit 230 kilovolt (“kV”) transmission line from the Company’s future Raines Substation to a proposed switching station, resulting in 230 kV Nebula-Raines Line #2399 (or “Nebula-Raines Line”). Specifically, Line #2399 will extend approximately 14.4 miles within a new 100-foot-wide right-of-way, supported by weathering steel double circuit monopoles with an idle conductor, and utilizing

¹ Ex. 2 (Application) at 1, 2.

² *Id.* at 1.

³ *Id.* at 2-3.

three-phase twin-bundled 768.2 Aluminum Conductor Steel Supported/Trapezoidal Wire/High Strength (“ACSS/TW/HS”) conductor with a summer transfer capability of 1,573 megavolt-ampere (“MVA”).

- (2) Nebula Station: Construct a new 230 kV switching station in Mecklenburg, County, Virginia on property owned by the Customer (“Nebula Station”).
- (3) Cloud-Nebula Line: Construct a new overhead single circuit 230 kV transmission line from the Company’s existing 230-115 kV Cloud Switching Station to the proposed 230 kV Nebula Station, resulting in 230 kV Cloud-Nebula Line #2402 (or “Cloud-Nebula Line”). Specifically, Line #2402 will extend approximately 0.9 mile within a new 100-foot-wide right-of-way, supported by weathering steel double circuit monopoles with an idle conductor, and utilizing three-phase twin-bundled 768.2 ACSS/TW/HS conductor with a summer transfer capability of 1,573 MVA.
- (4) Station Work: Perform minor station-related work at the future Raines Substation and existing Cloud Switching Station.

In the Application, Dominion asserted that the proposed Project is necessary to: (i) assure that the Company can provide requested service to MEC, enabling MEC to provide service to its data center customer in Mecklenburg, Virginia, (ii) maintain reliable service for the overall growth in the Boydton Load Area, and (iii) comply with mandatory North American Electric Reliability Corporation Reliability Standards.⁴

In its Application, the Company identified an approximately 14.4-mile overhead proposed route, the Nebula-Raines Line (“Nebula-Raines Proposed Route”), as well as an approximately 15.4-mile overhead alternative route, an approximately 14.9-mile overhead alternative route, and an approximately 15.0-mile overhead alternative route.⁵ Dominion stated that the Company selected the Nebula-Raines Proposed Route as it is the shortest route and

⁴ *Id.*

⁵ *Id.* at 5.

therefore requires the least right-of-way acreage, and reasonably minimizes adverse impact to the environment of the area concerned.⁶

In its Application, the Company identified an approximately 0.9-mile overhead proposed route for the Cloud-Nebula Line (“Cloud-Nebula Proposed Route”).⁷ Dominion stated that it developed this route to reduce impacts to one privately owned parcel and routed the line along the edges of the parcel rather than cut through the center.⁸

The Company stated that the desired in-service target date for the proposed Project is November 1, 2028.⁹ The Company represented that the total estimated conceptual cost of the Project as proposed is approximately \$129.5 million, which includes approximately \$107 million for transmission-related work and approximately \$22.5 million for substation-related work (2024 dollars).¹⁰

On February 28, 2025, the Commission issued an Order for Notice and Hearing, which, among other things: docketed the Company’s Application; established a procedural schedule; directed Dominion to provide notice of its Application to interested persons and the public; scheduled a public hearing for the purpose of receiving testimony and evidence on the Application; provided interested persons an opportunity to file comments on the Application or participate as respondents; directed the Commission’s Staff (“Staff”) to investigate the Application and file testimony and exhibits containing its findings and recommendations; and

⁶ *Id.*

⁷ *Id.* at 6.

⁸ *Id.*

⁹ *Id.*

¹⁰ *Id.* at 8.

appointed a Hearing Examiner to conduct all further proceedings in this matter on behalf of the Commission and file a final report.

Staff requested that the Department of Environmental Quality (“DEQ”) coordinate an environmental review of the proposed Project by the appropriate agencies and provide a report on the review.¹¹ On April 2, 2025, DEQ filed its report on Dominion’s Application, which includes the Wetland Impact Consultation provided by DEQ’s Office of Wetlands and Stream Protection.

On July 2, 2025, Staff filed the testimony of Jason Brannick with an attached Staff Report. On July 16, 2025, Dominion filed its rebuttal testimony. No notices of participation were filed. The Commission received eight public comments on the Company’s Application.

A public hearing was convened in the Commission’s courtroom on July 29, 2025, to receive testimony and evidence offered by Dominion and Staff on the Application. One member of the public signed up to testify at the hearing as a public witness.¹²

On August 15, 2025, the Senior Hearing Examiner issued the Report of M. Renae Carter, Senior Hearing Examiner (“Report”). In the Report, the Senior Hearing Examiner made the following findings:¹³

1. The record demonstrates the Project is needed to ensure Mecklenburg Electric Cooperative can provide electric service to a data center customer in Mecklenburg County, to relieve identified violations of mandatory North American Electric Reliability Corporation Reliability Standards, and to maintain reliable electric service to customers in Mecklenburg Electric Cooperative’s Boydton and South Hill Load Areas;

¹¹ Letter from Andrew F. Major, State Corporation Commission, dated January 27, 2025, to David L. Davis, Department of Environmental Quality, filed in Case No. PUR-2025-00014; Letter from Andrew F. Major, State Corporation Commission, dated January 27, 2025, to Bettina Rayfield, Department of Environmental Quality, filed in Case No. PUR-2025-00014.

¹² Tr. at 7-8.

¹³ Report at 38-39.

2. Construction of the Project using idle conductor is reasonable under the circumstances of this case, including, but not limited to, the projected load growth in the area, the likely need for future transmission projects, cost considerations, and disruptions to property owners that would be associated with adding a second conductor at a later time;
3. Demand-side management programs will not obviate need for the Project;
4. The Project will support economic development in Mecklenburg County and the Commonwealth;
5. The Company considered the feasibility of locating the Project within existing rights-of-way, but existing rights-of-way cannot adequately serve the identified needs for the Project;
6. The Nebula-Raines Proposed Route with Modified Fisher Segment¹⁴ and Modified Slater Segment 2,¹⁵ and the Cloud-Nebula Proposed Route, will avoid or reasonably minimize adverse impact to the greatest extent reasonably practicable on the scenic assets, historic and cultural resources recorded with the Department of Historic Resources, cultural resources identified by federally recognized Tribal Nations in the Commonwealth, and environment of the area concerned;
7. Dominion should be required to obtain all necessary environmental permits and approvals that are needed to construct and operate the Project and to comply with all uncontested recommendations listed in the Department of Environmental Quality Report's "Summary of Findings and Recommendations";
8. The Commission should not condition any [certificate of public convenience and necessity ("CPCN")] issued in this case on requirements that the Company: (a) avoid ecological cores or locate the Project route along the edges of such cores; (b) develop an invasive species management plan; (c) implement right-of-way restoration and maintenance practices different than the Company's current practices; and (d) utilize best management practices regarding erosion and sediment control, spill prevention controls and countermeasures, and stormwater management, beyond what is required by applicable laws and regulations and what is included in the Company's Annual Standards and Specifications approved by the Department of Environmental Quality;
9. Commission precedent supports a finding that Dominion should plot and identify wells on the Project's erosion and sediment control plans in place of the recommendation to field mark and protect wells within a 1,000-foot radius of the Project site;

¹⁴ *Id.* at 16. "[T]he Company and Mr. Fisher were able to reach an agreement on a modification to the proposed Project, the Modified Fisher Segment, of approximately 0.6 miles in length. The Modified Fisher Segment would increase the length of the Nebula-Raines Line by 0.03 miles and would reduce impact to forested wetlands from 15.8 to 15.2 acres."

¹⁵ *Id.* at 17-18. "This modification shifts the Nebula-Raines Proposed Route north and closer to the boundary of Mr. Slater's property." Mr. Slater views this shift as an improvement. *See* Ex. 11 (Teichert Rebuttal) at 11.

10. Should instream work be required for the Project, Dominion should coordinate with the Department of Wildlife Resources and the Department of Environmental Quality through the permitting process and adhere to permitting stipulations to protect the Whitemouth Shiner and Carolina Darter;
11. The Project will not adversely impact the health and safety of persons in the area concerned;
12. The Company reasonably considered the requirements of the Virginia Environmental Justice Act; and
13. The Company's request for approval of a desired in-service target date of November 1, 2028, and an authorization sunset date of November 1, 2029, for energization of the Project, is reasonable.

On August 28, 2025, Dominion filed letter comments on the Report. In its comments, Dominion supported the Report's findings and recommendations while noting certain corrections and clarifications. On September 2, 2025, Staff filed a letter stating that Staff had reviewed the Report and supports the analysis and conclusions set forth therein.

NOW THE COMMISSION, having considered this matter, is of the opinion and finds as follows.

Senior Hearing Examiner's Report

After analyzing the law and weighing the evidence – and providing a thorough and detailed analysis thereof – the Senior Hearing Examiner recommended that the Commission enter an order:¹⁶

- (1) ***ADOPTING*** the findings and recommendations in [the] Report;
- (2) ***GRANTING*** the Company's Application to construct the Project;
- (3) ***ISSUING*** a [CPCN] to the Company to construct and operate the Project, incorporating the Nebula-Raines Proposed Route with Modified Fisher Segment and Modified Slater Segment 2, the Nebula Station, and the Cloud-Nebula Proposed Route; and

¹⁶ Report at 39.

(4) **DISMISSING** this case from the Commission's docket of active cases.

Upon consideration of this matter, the Commission concludes that the Senior Hearing Examiner's findings and recommendations are supported by the law and the evidence, have a rational basis, and should be adopted. We further adopt Dominion's corrections and clarifications as reflected in the Company's comments to the Hearing Examiner's Report. The Commission further finds that the public convenience and necessity requires the construction of the Project and that a CPCN authorizing the Project should be issued, subject to the recommended findings and conditions contained in the Report.¹⁷

Accordingly, IT IS ORDERED THAT:

- (1) The Commission adopts the Senior Hearing Examiner's findings and recommendations in the Report.
- (2) The Senior Hearing Examiner's recommendations as set forth in the Report are ordered.
- (3) Dominion is authorized to construct and operate the Project as proposed in its Application, subject to the recommended findings and conditions in the Report, as set forth herein.
- (4) Pursuant to §§ 56-46.1, 56-265.2, and related provisions of Title 56 of the Code, the Company's request for approval of the necessary CPCN to construct and operate the Project is granted as provided for herein.

¹⁷ The Commission has fully considered the evidence and arguments in the record. *See also Board of Supervisors of Loudoun County v. State Corp. Comm'n*, 292 Va. 444, 454 n.10 (2016) ("We note that even in the absence of this representation by the Commission, pursuant to our governing standard of review, the Commission's decision comes to us with a presumption that it considered all of the evidence of record.") (citation omitted).

(5) Pursuant to the Utility Facilities Act, § 56-265.1 *et seq.* of the Code, the Commission issues the following CPCN to Dominion:

Certificate No. ET-DEV-MEC-2025-B, which authorizes Virginia Electric and Power Company under the Utility Facilities Act to operate certificated transmission lines in Mecklenburg County, all as shown on the map attached to the certificate, and to construct and operate facilities as authorized in Case No. PUR-2025-00014 and cancels Certificate No. ET-DEV-MEC-2025-A, issued to Virginia Electric and Power Company in Case No. PUR-2022-00167 on September 22, 2025.

(6) Within thirty (30) days from the date of this Final Order, the Company shall provide to the Commission's Division of Public Utility Regulation electronic maps for the foregoing Certificate Number that show the routing of the transmission lines approved herein. Maps shall be submitted to Michael Cizenski, Deputy Director, Division of Public Utility Regulation, mike.cizenski@scc.virginia.gov.

(7) Upon receiving the maps directed in Ordering Paragraph (6), the Commission's Division of Public Utility Regulation forthwith shall provide the Company copies of the CPCN issued in Ordering Paragraph (5) with the maps attached.

(8) The Project approved herein must be constructed and in service by November 1, 2028. The Commission approves a CPCN sunset date of November 1, 2029, for the Project. No later than ninety (90) days before the CPCN sunset date approved herein, for good cause shown, the Company is granted leave to apply, and to provide the basis, for any extension requested.

(9) This matter is dismissed.

A COPY hereof shall be sent electronically by the Clerk of the Commission to all persons on the official Service List in this matter. The Service List is available from the Clerk of the Commission.